



## Developing an environmental policy and guidelines for Sabah, Malaysia

Sabah is blessed with an abundance of natural resources and unique ecological communities and ecosystems. These resources also provide the basis for development and economic growth in the State.

The purpose of this project was to develop a practical environmental policy across all sectors which reflects the balance between environmental protection and economic benefits and is in line with the direction of Sabah state. The project aimed to identify the issues and relating gaps of the environmental problems for all sectors in Sabah; develop a consolidated environmental policy that can be incorporated into plans, programs and projects for economic and social development for all sectors in Sabah; and create strategies and frameworks for balancing environmental issues with sustainable development for all sectors.

In addition, the Environment Protection Department of Sabah has a requirement for environmental impact assessments on key projects. General guidelines as well as sector specific guidelines for how to prepare such environmental impact assessments have been issued and in some cases updated over the years. The department identified a need to review the procedures and requirements in order to include issues, which originally were left out, delete issues which have proven insignificant, and altogether align the Sabah requirements to international levels. The project therefore aimed to update and produce new guidelines for production of environmental impact assessments in general and for specific sectors in the state of Sabah, Malaysia.